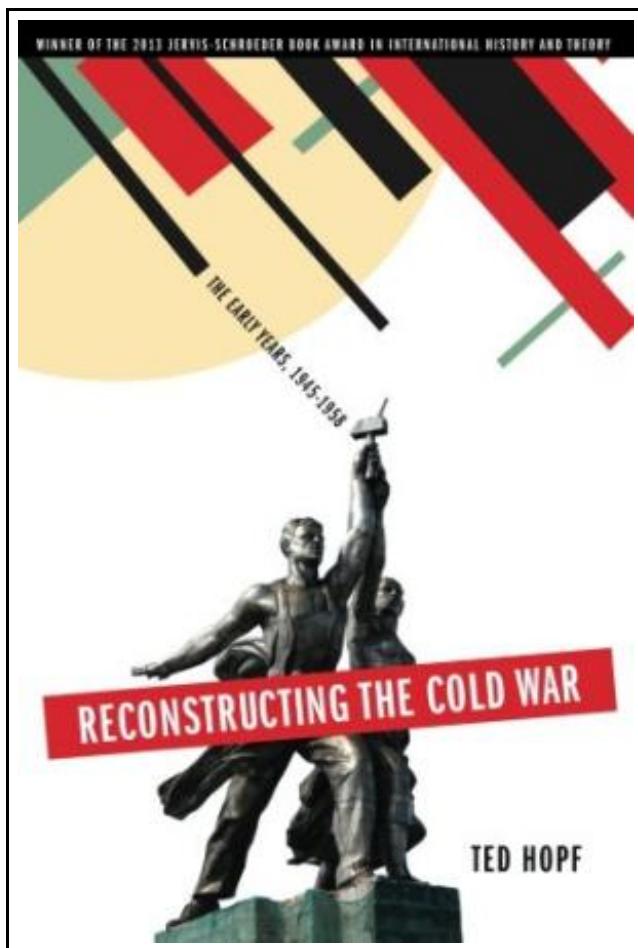


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Oxford University Press Inc. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW PRINT ON DEMAND., Reconstructing the Cold War: The Early Years, 1945-1958, Ted Hopf, General answers are hard to imagine for the many puzzling questions that are raised by Soviet relations with the world in the early years of the Cold War. Why was Moscow more frightened by the Marshall Plan than the Truman Doctrine? Why would the Soviet Union abandon its closest socialist ally, Yugoslavia, just when the Cold War was getting under way? How could Khrushchev's de-Stalinized domestic and foreign policies at first cause a warming of relations with China, and then lead to the loss of its most important strategic ally? What can explain Stalin's failure to ally with the leaders of the decolonizing world against imperialism and Khrushchev's enthusiastic embrace of these leaders as anti-imperialist at a time of the first detente of the Cold War? It would seem that only idiosyncratic explanations could be offered for these seemingly incoherent policy outcomes. Or, at best, they could be explained by the personalities of Stalin and Khrushchev as leaders. The latter, although plausible, is incorrect. In fact, the most Stalinist of Soviet leaders, the secret police chief and sociopath, Lavrentii Beria, was the most enthusiastic proponent of de-Stalinized foreign and domestic policies after Stalin's death in March 1953. Ted Hopf argues, instead, that it was Soviet identity that explains these anomalies. During Stalin's rule, a discourse of danger prevailed in Soviet society, where any deviations from the idealized version of the New Soviet Man, were understood as threatening the very survival of the Soviet project itself. But the discourse of danger did not go unchallenged. Even under the rule of Stalin, Soviet society understood a socialist Soviet Union as a more secure, diverse, and socially democratic place. This...

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